EVEN FRITZI SCHEFF CAN'T SPOIL YOU.

Tribulations of a Grand Opera Soubrette and a Company of Cakewalk Opera Comedians Trying to Present a Real Operetta-Sorrowful State of a Town Which Has No School for Such Shows.

And now what rests but that we spend the time With stately triumphs, mirthful comic shows. Such as befit the pleasures of the court?

When a man begins to think often of the better things which he knew twentyfire years ago it behooves him to be wary in his judgments. Let him reconsider his conclusions in the light of the correction of Brutus: "I said an elder soldier, not a better." When, however, one longs for the revival of some play which filled the days of his youth with the sunlight of a pure delight, and unexpectedly that play is brought forward once more and he finds that it is still girt about with the garments of glory, he has reason to rejoice and to be

It has been the melancholy duty of THE Sun's chronicler of musical incidents to say often in recent seasons that comic operetta has gone to the dogs. Many persons, whose lines had not been cast in the pleasant places of the Standard Theatre and Wallack's in the days when real operettas were performed, saw no reason why this form of entertainment, wretched in so far as they knew it, should not go to the bow-wows. Such an attitude is not at all remarkable in a period in which

If the truth were known it would probably be learned that less than half the persons who go to so-called comic "opera" shows in these days have any definite notion of what a "comic opera" or a comic o peretta is. To most of them any farcical play with singing in it is a comic opera. They make no distinction between a piece like "The School Girl" and one like "Erminie." They put "The Mikado" and "Piff, Paff, Pouf" in the same class, and the chances are that most of them prefer the latter.

Wang is become a classic.

To such base use has comic operetta come at last. Yet this is a form of entertainment which is capable of reaching a high artistic level. For demonstrations of this fact see almost any one of the Gilbert and Sullivan works, Smith and De Koven's "Robin Hood" or Strauss's "Die Fledermaus." The chasm which separates such musical plays from "The School Girl" and "The Yankee Consul" is quite as wide as a church door and as deep as a well.

One of the examples of attistic excellence in the field of comic operetta often quoted by this writer is Franz von Suppé's "Fatinitza." For years it has been permitted to slumber in dust and silence. For years the luxurious melody of its admirable score has been an unsung song and the bright comedy of its book a sealed letter. So long has it been neglected that in the mind of THE SUN'S music observer it rose to the position of a beautiful dream. half remembered, half forgot.

Suddenly it was announced that this comic operetta was to be brought forward The cause of this was dapper, dainty Fritzi Scheff, sometime Cherubino and Musetta of grand opera soubretteville and now would-be prima donna assoluta of comic operettaland. It was expected by certain experienced purveyors of public amusements that Mme. Scheff (or is she only "Miss" now?) would be a star of the first magnitude in the operatta firmament. So trained operetta carpenters were set to work to build her a home.

The failure of "Babette" is on record. "The Two Roses" was equally unsuccessful. Both of these pieces were attempts at genuine operetta, but they were misdirected. The former at any rate had a score worthy of consideration, but the book was dull and the part prepared for the scubrette was one ingeniously contrived to prevent the exhibition of her best qualities as a comedienne.

ceived that the animated Fritzi is at her best when she enacts a saucy minx? Cherubino-a boy, to be sure, but saucy nevertheless-Musetta, and similar personages are exactly in her line. Sentimental and amiable maidens are not. And in "Babette," of all things, they asked Fritzi to dance! She knows no more about dancing than a

Broadway sandwich man.

Possibly some one suggested to the clever of sordid slang. managers that when a woman was built on the Fritzi Scheff plan the smartest thing to do was to get her out of skirts as quickly and a good thing, too. The pliant Fritzi has not been niggardly in the revelation of curves. But one female form divine cannot make a whole operatta.

The production of "Fatinitza" has given much joy to many whose memories have been repeating to them that it was good in its kind. It is; there is no denying that. It is just as good now as it was in the bywere not the chronic grumblings of discontented oldsters. But Fritzi-was she aught but curves? Well, that is another story. At any rate, it was on Monday

Perhaps in a few days she will penetrate beneath the lisle thread surface of her rôle. there is a divinity that divinely shapes our limbs, that is for some of us, thus enabling us to dazzle the vision of man and command the secret sympathy of woman, it is still needful to have a happy countenance and a obserful heart. But possibly the amiable Fritzi was distraught with

anxiety on Monday night For the moment let that matter rest. Let us briefly consider the operetta and try to be wise. The story of "Fatinitza" is improbable, of course, but the improbability is chiefly in the premises, which you this: "The music of this work orobestrated accept cheerfully as you accept all premises by the Double Bassoon Orchestration in theatreland. Lieut. Vladimir is enacted Bureau." guises himself as a girl be may be the real | write the instrumental score of his own thing. In these days boys are usually music? It was said that Mr. Rice could not performed by women. In Shakespeare's even note down his own melodies, but his day, we are told, women were enacted by music was certainly better than that of the boys, but where, oh, where, did they get boys who could impersonate Juliet and up cold bread pudding made out of crusts

Viola? Ah, that, indeed, is another story. The comedy of "Fatinitan" is spontaneous and truly humorous. It rests on of to-day are only distorted extravaganzas the infatuation of a senile General for the or worse, how is it possible for singing young Fatinitia, who is none other than actors to be so trained that they can perform Vladimir in skirts. Before the curtain rises | the admirable works of the Viennese school the General has lost track of his charmer, but how naturally she is restored to him! Private theatricals in the dull camp, a rebearsal, Vladimir as the leading lady, enter

the General, and there you are. off by the Turks, with whom the Russians happen at that moment to be at war, and is sold to a genial pasha to be a member of | real operetta they simply cannot do it. his harem. Here is a chance for more fun. Rescue by the infatuated General. Final because Vladimir has to return to military

This story is told without any attempt | artists in the cast,

HOCH, SCHOENE FATINITZA! at catchpenny jokes or inane dialogue. The people speak naturally and the humor The people speak naturally and the humor flows spontaneously. Of course, this is not strictly true of the English version. Such a book could never pass through the mill of a Broadway theatre without having its literary simplicity carefully removed of thos by one of the booksmiths who are kept on living. hand for that purpose and having a lot of Tenderloin gags interpolated. Let us be grateful that these are fewer than usual

Suppé's music is so far beyond the ordinary level of comic operetta scores of us to send us home happy. recent origin that it seems to soar into the realms of glory on pinions of genius. For the information of those whose notions of comic opera have been formed in late years. let it be said that the score of this work does not contain a single cakewalk or coon | training of competent operetta performers. song, not even a Russian one. If it had been composed in the year of grace 1904, a Russian coon song would have been

But there are tunes possessed of character. The Russian music sounds as if it might be Russian, though it is not, and the Turkish music at any rate as nearly Turkish as are the cigarettes made by the red fezzed gentlemen in the Broadway windows. Neither is the real thing, but both are good imitations. Best of all the music is always tuneful, delicious to the ear, and at the same time comforting to the artistic conscience because it is good

It belongs to the aristocracy of comic operetta. Its school is that of Vienna, a school of which Suppe himself was the founder and Johann Strauss the con-Since Suppe's "Pique Dame" tinuator. was produced in 1864 and "Die Schone Galatea" in 1865, the style of the Viennese operetta has been clearly defined. The second Johann Strauss, composer of *Die Fledermaus" (1874), "Prinz Methusalem" (1877) and "Die Lustige Krieg" (1881), supermposed upon the skeleton framed by Suppe the captivating exterior of the Strauss waltz. What Wagner said of that waltz may fairly be applied in a compari-son of contemporaneous operettas with those of the Viennese masters:

"One of Strauss's waltzes as far surpasses in charm, finish, and real musical worth hundreds of the artificial compositions of his contemporaries as the tower of St. Stephen's surpasses the advertising

columns on the Paris boulevards." The operetta of to-day is as the Parisian advertising column in the presence of the St. Stephen's Tower of "Fatinitza." All of which makes it the more saddening that the performers occupied so industriously in the exhibition now current at the Broadway Theatre know so little of what they are doing. Fritzi Scheff herself way Monday night a most staidand decean

representative of the gay and dashing young Vladimir, who ought to be a veritable imp of deviltry. In the abbreviated skirts of the false Fatinitza the soubrette comported herself like one in the midst of a Brooklyn

Where were the impudence, the assur ance, the perfect self-confidence of our little Musetta? All lost, irretrievably lost in the woods of comic operadom, where the cowardly lion roareth and the straw man mourneth for his lost arms.

But if she was a disappointment, the same cannot be said of such impersonators as Albert Hart and Louis Harrison. These did just what was expected of them. The former is a product of recent years and his training has been entirely in the field of the so-called comic opera and musical comedy of to-day. He made a valiant yet futile attempt to play Kantchukoff as it ought to be played.

He was wise enough to perceive that the sidewalk conversational methods of the contemporaneous comic opera comedian were unsuitable to this operetta. But when he put aside that with which he was familiar he had to attempt that with which crowned with faded laurels

Of Mr. Harrison it is not possible to write with patience. He has always been a burlesque actor ever since he cavorted through the realms of the Rice extrava- | Fritz Kreisler. ganzas in company with Willie Edouin, Henry Dixey and John Mackey. He was perfectly at home in that line of business and he has been in it ever since. His confidential communications to the audience and his drawl were insufficient for an impersonation of Izet Pasha, who is a delightful personage when unfettered by the chains of Broadway jests and the bonds

As for the others engaged in the revival of "Fatinitza," it can only be said that they must have been chosen with a view to as possible. Lieutenant Vladimir in "Fat- economy or to the early burial of one of initza" afforded opportunities for the dis- the best operettas ever written. "Fatinitza" play of curves. So "Fatinitza" it was demands good singers and good actors in all the parts, even the small ones. The performers betrayed upon the stage of the Broadway Theatre rely upon public imagination for their singing and upon the habitual resignation of the period for

their acting. Yet there is no intent to censure these persons for their inability to interpret a real operetta. They have no models and gone years and the reminiscences of it there is no school. Let any one take a glance over the field and discover a legitimate comic operetta if he can. The concoctions which are now called "comic operas" are not even as good as the bursques and extravaganzas which Edward E. Rice used to project into the world of

amusement. "Evangeline" would be classed as a omic opera if it were produced to-day, and "Hiawatha" would almost be accorded a place among grand operas. As for "Horrors," that certainly was a more meritorious work than some of the things now called

comic operas. What can you expect in a time when the music of these things is orchestrated by negle Hall this afternoon. contract and the fact advertised in the programme? It is true that a line on the house bill at a Broadway place of amusement only last week read something like

What sort of "composer" is it that cannot even note down his own melodies, but his contemporaneous operetta baker, who serves

left by others. Since, then, the so-called comic operas or the piquant productions of the Parislan writere? People who can sing are not needed in the "comic operas" of the present Then the fun begins. Vladimir is carried acrobatics come next. When the incomopera world are called upon to interpret a

We shall presently have an opportunity to ascertain whether singers of high rank disappearance of the charming Fatinites, can bring themselves into the spirit of the operetta. Mr. Conried promises to produce duty and the essential, captivating, lucid Die Fledermaus' in the Metropolitan Opera House with some of his most admired

The work is worthy of their attention. They will be able to sing the music and some of them will act the comedy excellently. We all know what to expect of Mme. Sembrich, for instance. If the others succeed in rising to the occasion, we shall have one of those rare treats which make life worth

"Die Fledermaus" is a work of art and it will not belittle the Metropolitan stage. The house is too large for it, and for that reason some of its delicious comedy will surely be lost, but enough of it may reach

But every lover of artistic musical entertainment who is also a lover of good fun must certainly long for the day when there will be in this city a theatre devoted to the production of real operettas and the

The following highly interesting paragraph appeared in the last programme book of the Philadelphia Orchestra:

"In the score of the 'Sinfonia Domestica' Richard Strauss has marked certain instruments ad libitum, but unfortunately this option does not include the oboe d'amour, an instrument which is absolutely essentia to an adequate rendering of the music. The management of the Philadelphia Orchestra, finding that it was impossible to secure the rarely used instrument in this country, ordered one from abroad. Unfortunately the instrument has been los in transit, necessitating at the last moment postponement of the 'Domestica' date. As many inquiries are received asking for information concerning the oboe d'amour, one may say, in brief, that it belongs to the family of the woodwind choir, and occupies a position between the oboe proper and the alto olos, cr cor anglais. The tone of the oboe d'amour is one of singular charm, and the instrument was used with telling effect by composers during the time of John Why it has been relegated Sebastian Bach. to the domain of the archaic by orchestral writers of the present day is difficult to understand."

The ad libitum instruments in the score of the "Domestic Symphony, or Papa, Mamma and the Baby, " are four saxophones It is, of course, not in the power of this writer to tell why the Philadelphia Orchestra found it impossible to get obci d'amore in this country, but it was not because there

are none here. A most excellent pair, owned by Frank Damrosch, have frequently figured in the performance of archaic music in this town. They are at this publication reposing in the reverent care of J. Fred Welle, organist of the Moravian Church at Bethlehem, Pa., where they have been doing their duty in a three days series of concerts of Bach's audo ended last night.

thriving city and pos-Europe is days off, wor form an offensive and defensive with this town for the peace and security W. J. HENDERSON. of obci d'amore?

NOTES OF MUSIC EVENTS.

The programme at the opera for the coming week is as follows: Monday morning, at 11:30 pre cisely, last performance of "Parsifal." Fremstad; Burgstaller, Van Rooy, Blass, Goritz. Conductor, Hertz. Monday evening, "Paust." Eames, Jacoby. Banermelster: Saleza, Piancon, Scotti. Conductor. Franko. Wednesday. "La Bohème." Sembrich. Alten: Caruso, Scot: Journet, Rossi. Conductor. Vigna. Thursday, at 8:30, first performance of (Der Ring des Nibelungen) "Das Rheingold." Fremstad, Walker, Alten, Weed; Burgstaller, Dippel. Van Rooy, Gorliz, Reiss, Bisss, Muhimann, Con-ductor, Hertz, Priday, "Aida," Nordica, Weiker: Caruso, Scotti, Plancon, Muhimenn, Conductor, Vigna, Saturday afternoon, "Lonengrip" and Saturday evening, "Carmen," with the same casts as heretofore.

The Adele Marguilles Trio will give its first con cert at Acolian Hall on Thursday evening. The programme will consist of Dvorak's trio, opus 90 it's D minor suite for plane and violin, and Paul Juon's new trio in A minor, opus 17.

Wassill Safonoff of Moscow will conduct the he was unfamiliar, and the attempt was fourth pair of Philharmonic concerts at Carnegie Hall on Friday afternoon and Saturday evening. erto, and the same composer's fantasy overture "Romeo and Juliet." The solo violinist will be

Fritz Kreisler, the violin virtuoso, will make his reappearance in an orchestral concert at Carnegie Hall on Tuesday evening. He will play the Brahms and Beethoven concertos and Tartini's "Devil's

Mme. Olga Samaroff, a Russian piantst who has recently arrived in this country, will give a concert in Carnegle Hall on Wednesday evening, Jan. 18. Mme. Samaroff is well known in her own country and also in Germany and England, where she has been concertizing for several years.

Campanari will resume his tour next week in incinnati, when he will sing with the Cincinnat Symphony Orchestra, Frank Van Der Stucken conductor. The following week he will be the soloist with the Pittsburg Symphony Orchestra.

When Miss Adele Avs der Ohe gives her only plano recital here on Monday afternoon, Jan. 5, in Mendelssohn Hall, she will have the assistance of Mr. David Mannes, who will play the violin part

Harold Randolph and Ernest Hutcheson will give a recital of music for two planos at Mendelssohn Hall on Wednesday afternoon. They will play Mozart's D major sonata. Rudorff's E major varia-tions, Dvernoy's study. "Feu Rolant." Saint-Sāens's variations on a theme by Beethoven, and Liszt's

The Olive Mead Quartet will give its hist concerat Mendelssohn Hall on Thursday evening. The programme will consist of Haydn's G minor quar-tet, Dvorak's terzetto for two violins and violal opus 74. and Schubert's D minor quartet.

The soldist for the fourth Sunday afternoon symphony concert of the New York Symphony Orchestra, on Jan. 8, will be Josef Hofmann, who will play the plane concerto in G by Rubinstein his old master. Two very interesting nocturnes for orchestra by Claude Debussy, a distinguished exponent of the French impressionist school, will be played for the first time in America by the New York Symphony Orchestra.

Pachmann will give his last plane recital at Cur-

Mrs. Grace Toennies, a lyric soprano, favorably known in this vicinity as a church and concert singer, is to give a vocal recital at Mendelssohn Hall on Saturday afternoon, Jan. 28, for which she has arranged a programme of special interest in presenting some Swedish songs by Sjögren, which will be heard for the first time in this country Bach, Brahms, Strauss, Grieg, Haydn, Handel and Taubert will be among the other composers rep resented in the programme.

A vocal recital will be given at Mendelssohn Hall on Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 24, by Percy Hemus, well known as the bass soloist of St. Patrick's Cathedral in this city, and in connection with important concert work throughout the country. His programme for the occasion will include many interesting numbers by Handel, Schubert, Schumann (the two seldom heard "Scottish songs"), Loewe and other distinguished composers.

The soloists for Sunday night's Victor Herbert concert at the Majestic Theatre will be Miss Minnie Methot and Clifford Wiley. The former will sing Liszt's "Loreley" and the latter the aria "DI Pro-venza" and Verdi's "La Traviata." The balance of writere? People who can sing are not needed in the "comic operas" of the present generation. Neither are people who can act. Clowning is the chief ingredient and acrobatics come next. When the incompetent singers and actors of the comic operation. The Toreadors, "The Dragoons of Alcala," and "The Toreadors," Selections from "It Happers and "The Toreadors," It Happ pened in Nordland" and "The Babes in Toyland," Herbert. The programme will conclude with the "Ride of the Valkyries," from "Die Walkuere."

> The Church Choral Society announces that in St. Bartholomew's Church, on Monday evening, Jan. 9, at 8:30 o clock, Edwin H. Lemare, the distinguished English organist, will give under its auspices a farewell recital on the eve of his final departure for England.

GRAFTING ON THE PRIMA DONNA

SOCIETY EXPECTS TO BE ENTER-TAINED BY HER OFF THE STAGE.

If the Dinner-Civing Hostess Can't Get One Star, Another Will Do-Begin at the Top and Work Down Is the Rule -How Singers Feel About Going Out.

One phase of her preeminence which the prima donna does not enjoy is the attention of society. It is agreeable to her to have the boxes crowded when she sings and to have none of the orchestra seats empty. She knows, and her manager knows, however, that the test of a singer's popularity is not to attract this public

The most profitable magnet is the singer who packs the galleries and balconies and fills the back spaces of the orchestra and the

parquet, with hundreds standing. To make herself popular with society it is frequently necessary for the prima donna to allow society certain of the distractions which it demands from her. She must go occasionally to dinners and teas and do some of the other things which most singers, for excellent reasons, hate.

"When I came back to America from Europe," said one of the women who are supposed to enjoy in large measure the friendship of the fashionable world, "I found myself invited about a great deal. As I have always been careful of my voice above everything else, I accepted very few of these invitations at the beginning, and now I accept still fewer.

"It is all very flattering to be invited out to this or that person's house until you have learned how selfish the motives of your hosts really are. They like to have all the well known singers from the opera at their houses, and so the dinner invitations come pouring in.

*The inexperienced ones who have just come to this country feel that they are being highly honored. It only takes a little while, though, for them to learn that there is no great honor in it.

"If the hostess fails to get one prima donna she will struggle to get another. When she does not meet with success in that quarter, she will angle for a contralto of a barytone, and, failing either, is perfectly willing to have some member of the opera school.

"The prima donna who goes out most to dinner is likely to be the most amiable of them all, but the social success of singers depends in a large measure on their ability to say 'no' to the persons who want them to ornament their dinner table along with the flowers and the plate.

"After a while some of the persons whom she has been kind enough to favor with her presence frequently will want her to some charity, and it will be either to be sto get out of that or she solved to submit. For that reason also has aust be wary of accept-

Most of these women have been in the world long enough to extricate themselves tactfully from any disagreeable complication which may arise from the desire to get them to sing for charity. There are many excellent reasons, however, why they do not care to accept the social attentions which New Yorkers are always trying to shower on them.

Few prima donnas are willing to sit in a oom. where anybody is smoking. To some the least bit of smoke is harmful. Mme. Fames was once unable to sing in Philadelphia because a man had smoked in a room three days before she occupied it. Then there is the danger of hot rooms and cool cabs, and other complications which lead ultimately to inflamed throats.

"If you are always sure that these people with whom you dine, to their great delight. and generally to your own great weariness," said the prima donna quoted, "would always come to hear you sing and buy tie when you gave concerts, it might be worth while to waste time with them. But that

does not always happen.

The people, in fact, who run after you most and are anxious to spend money in entertaining you to their own social aggrandizement are the last ones in the world, in some cases, to buy tickets when you ging They seem to argue that so you sing. They seem to argue that so long as they have given you a dinner there is no reason why they should buy tickets to hear you."

While this may be true of the great singers in the opera company, it is certain that the smaller ones owe much of their success the smaller ones owe much of their success to the persistency with which they pay calls and keep themselves friendly in many houses. One barytone who for several years has given concerts in this city is a most successful social worker, and, fine artist as he is, most of his success is due to the interest he has aroused in women what he of use to him. able to be of use to him.

able to be of use to him.

Such methods could not help a person who sings at the Metropolitan, although they do aid a concert singer immensely. Several years ago a young woman who had not made a great success at the Metropolitan Opers House came back from Italy in her second season armed with letters which she was certain would make her the greatest card of the season at the her the greatest card of the season at the

She scattered her letters right and left and found the persons she met charmingly hospitable and delightful. She had on her hands so many dinners and teas that she was tired and in poor voice half the time. Then the friends in the boxes who had given her the dinner the night before would observe that she was such a charming woman and it was too had she sang so poorly. The great public, which did not have the opportunity to come in contact with her personally and could only judge from her performances on the stage, saw nothing attractive in her whatever; so she lost her Grant, monologist; Cooper and Robinson

attractive in her whatever, so she lost her engagement at the opera altogether, and has never come back.

There are few times when these women are able to accept invitations. Even Mine. Senger-Bettague, although a stalwart Griden and the stalwart man prima donna, never goes cut of the house the day before she sings, or on that day. Emma Fames stays in bed all day

day. Emma Fames stays in bed all day after she has sung, and never goos out the evening before or after.

Mme. Sembrich rarely leaves the house the night before she sings, and just as rarely misses a long walk lasting two or three hours in the open air on the days on which she is to appear. Mme. Nordica confines herself to the protection of one of her automobiles if she ventures out the day before she sings. Alno Ackté follows the example of Lilli Lehmann and stays in bed the day she sings. This sort of regimen permits little time for even the few social diversions that the average priva donna allows herself.

*I never could tell, said the prima donna who confided her woes to The Sun reporter, why people who knew may very slightly invited me to go to their houses for dinner, unless it was for the slight social distinction that my presence might give. Now when

that my presence might give. Now when I go to dinner it is only at the house of those persons whom I know very well and have

persons whom I know very well and have been acquainted with many years, just as an ordinary American woman would do.

"If people want to invite me to their houses for the sake of giving me food, I wish they would send the food here. If that gives them any satisfaction I will eat it in my own house. As it is, I like what my own cook prepares more than what I had at the few dinner parties I used to attend."

From the Burlington News.

Jesse Bentley, the noted trapper, recently trapped two large cub bears on Equinox

This makes 4 bears, 18 foxes, 12 coons, 74 mink. 57 muskrats, 87 skunks, several weasels, which are worth 20 cents apiece, and 3 lynx which he deliberately let go because the

NEW YEAR AUDIENCES. They Are Now the Best in All the Year at New York Theatres.

"The banner theatrical night of the year," said the Broadway manager, "is New Year's eve. It's funny, but at one time that night meant empty benches. It was considered even worse than Good Friday.

"In the old days managers used to give away their seats for the New Year's eve performance so that they would be sure to have some people in the house that night I remember an experience I had in disposing of a bunch of tickets for a New Year's eve performance.
"I was at the Fifth Avenue Theatre then, and the attraction I had was a good show.

Still, we feared to have empty seats at the last performance of the year, and I stuffed a couple of hundred tickets in my pocke early in the week, ready and willing to give hem away to any one who would take

"I had a friend in the Custom House then, and I dropped in to see him a day or so before the year ended. Chester A. Arthur was then Collector of the Port. My friend took me into Arthur's office and introduced me to him. introduced me to him.
"We chatted for a time, and then I thought we chatted for a time, and then the distinct of the wad of tickets in my pocket that I wanted to give away. I thought possibly the Collector might have some political henchmen whom he might want to stake tickets and I saked him if he would not

to tickets, and I asked him if he would not

accept a bunch of them for his friends.
"But why should I accept them?' asked Because I want to give them away, and to tell the truth that is the only way I can get rid of them for this one performance,
I replied.
The future President of the United

States seemed to think it rather extraor-dinary that a theatrical manager was willing to give away something for nothing, and he plied me with questions. I told him, just as I am telling you, that New Year's eve was one of the two worst nights of the year for the theatres, for it meant slim houses.

ou't ever worry about your attendance said the Collector with a hearty 'This building houses a number of augh. ople who are always trying to get something for nothing.'
I handed over the tickets I had to the

Collector, and he gave them to the Custom House employees. They all made use of them and we played to a full house. From a hoodeo to the banner theatrical "From a hoodeo to the banner theatrical night of the year is a big jump. Managers can thank the women for it. In no other city in this country is the New Year welcomed with such a whoop as in this.

"Men used to stick close to their homes and their clubs the last night of the year."

That meant that the women had to stay home, too. Now everybody is cut to see the New Year in, and they spend the early part of the night in the playhouses. That is as it should be. It pleases them and in-creases the manager's bank roll and gives him a kindly feeling for the new year.

The best all round theatrical day of the year is Washington's Birthday.

theatre gives two performances on that day, and it is a poor attraction that can't display the 'Standing room only' sign.

'Thanksgiving Day is the next best day, and then comes Lincoln's Birthday. Those four days theatrical men all look forward.

In a few years they hope to add Good to. In a few years they hope to add Good Friday to this calendar. The old puritanical feeling in regard to attending the theatre on this day is rapidly dying out. In a few years it will have passed away, and the attendance at the theatres on Good Friday night will be up to the average."

The Brooklyn Theatres.

The Brooklyn theatres all begin the new year with good programmes. At the Majestic this week is "Twirly-Whirly," the last Weberfieldian show, with Ross and Fenton of that famous aggregation of comedians and pretty girls in the star parts. There is a big chorus of pretty girls in this production, and in the company surrounding Hoss and Fenton are such well known actors as Bob Harris, Samuel Sidman, Will Howard and Julia West.

De Wolf Hopper, with the revival of his early opera, "Wang," comes to the Broad-way Theatre this week. The opera was gorgeously remounted for its Broadway production last season, and in this presentaion the costumes and scenery bave retained. The cast includes pretty Marguerite Clark and many other girls and is certain to attract in Broadway.

The Orpheum has a generous programme headed by Irene Bentley, who sings the best songs from the many operas in which best songs from the many persons as he has appeared. As an extra attraction Rose Stahl and her company present for the first time at the Orpheum her well known sketch. "The Chorus Lady." There are sketch, "The Chorus Lady." There are many more clever vaudeville performers besides these, among them Harry Gilfoil. the Eight Kaufmans, bicyclists; Thorne and Carleton, Press Eldridge, Harper Desn and and Bailey and Lavell's dogs.

At the Amphion Theatre is an interesting production in Eugenie Blair and her com-pany in Pinero's "Iris" in the early part of the week, and in the latter half an excellent dramatization of Wilkie Collins's novel "Mercy Merrick."

The Grand Opera House has a play new

to Brooklyn in Broadhurst and Currie's production of "Texas," a play giving a vivid portrayal of the vigorous life in the It has a strong cast and at-At the Folly this week is Joe Welch in his

At the rolly this week is soe weath it his latest Hebrew character drama. "Cohen's Luck." Mr. Welch has won great success in the new play, which is a clever study of conditions in the East Side and has many characters familiar to that environment. Another extensive holiday bill will start the new year at Hyde & Behman's. Its feature is a novel scenic and song filus-tration of plantation life in the sunny South. The book and music are by Max Hoffman. The book and music are cy sax rioiman. Ten colored comedians and singers take part in this. An added feature is the Dollar Troupe of acrobats that has made a sensation abroad. Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Keiny appear in the comedy "In Trust," and other well known performers are the Jackson family, bicrolists: Callahan and Mack.

colored comedians, and the Allapos. At the Park Theatre Patrice will appear, supported by her usual good company, in her domestic drama of last season.

*Driven From Home." It is presented with a fine scenic equipment.

One of the most popular buriesque organizations, the Trocadero Buriesquers, comes to the Star this week, with two buriettas and a specialty programme, including as a special feature Steely, Doty and Coe, musical comedians of merit.

*A Wise Guy," with Edmund Hayes in his original character, moves i is presented by the Brigadiers Burles-

At Keeney's Theatre, Corse Payton and Grace Fox make their dibut in vaudeville in a light comedy entitled "The Honeymoon," written by Etta Reed Payton. The Champagne Dancers from "The Silver Slipper" are another attraction, and among others on the bill are Barry and Halvers, late of "Babes in Toyland." Slater and Williams, Reidy and Currier, the Carson Brothers, acrobats; Leipsig the conjuror, and Philbrooks and Raynolds.

At the Montauk Charles Frohman presents E. H. Sothern and Julia Mariowe in "Much Ado About Nothing," "Hamlet" and "Romeo and Juliet."

The week's play at the Bijou is 'The Cavalier,' a dramatization of Charles Major's novel. "The Cherry Pickers" is being played at Payton's Lee Avenue Theatre.

"A Wife's Secret" is the play booked at At the Novelty "Too Proud to Beg" will

Watson's Theatre has a vandeville bul aut the burlesque "Girls Will Be Girls."

PLAYBILLS OF THE NEW YEAR

ONE OF THEM BRINGS FRANCIS WILSON IN A NEW COMEDY.

Clyde Fitch Has Written "Cousin Billy" Especially for Him-Burlesque en "The College Widow"-R. T. Haines as a Star - "Siberia" With New Frills.

Francis Wilson in a new comedy, the

first Weber-Ziegfeld burlesque, Robert T. Haines as the star in a new play written by his wife and a revival of the old melodrama "Siberia" with up to date frills, are the slight novelties offered in the theatres this week for the beginning of the new year. Mr. Wilson will make his first appearance as one of Charles Frohman's stars at the Criterion Theatre to-morrow evening in "Cousin Billy," written especially for him by Clyde Fitch. There is to be neither singing nor dancing in this new Wilson play, but plenty of amusing incidents and novel situations are promised, and it is predicted that Mr. Wilson will be able to please his admirers fully as well as he did in musical comedy. He will play the rôle of an Allentown, Pa., ex-alderman of a sentimental turn of mind who is m king a tour of Europe and who finds him elf in many humorous and romantic complications. A handsome scenic production has been prepared and Mr. Frohman has supplied a company which includes Edward Abeles, Edith Barker, May Robson, Beatrice Agnew, Zella Sears, Rosa Cooke, Marion Brooks, Angela Keir, Ora Lee, Grant Mitchell, William Lewers, Sydney Rice and others. The scenes of the comedy are laid in Paris, Switzerland and Allentown.

The first burlesque of the Weber-Zieg-'eld company, to be produced in the Weber Music Hall in Thursday evening, carica-tures "The College Widow." Edgar Smith who wrote the book, and Maurice Levi, who is responsible for the music, describe it as a musical satire, based on that comedy. It treats principally of the football feature of Mr. Ade's play. The college is a girls'

school instead of a boys. Anna Held will be seen in a rôle different from any she has had before, and Marie Dressler's part, comprising four of those in the comedy welded into one, is heralded as an even better opportunity for her powers than that of Philopena Schnitz, in Higglady-Piggledy." Joe Weber plays the last thing that would be thought of -a little girl. The new piece is to be added to "Higgledy-Piggledy," going on soon after 9 o'clock.

In "Once Upon a Time," the latest play by Genevieve G. Haines, author of "Hearts Aflame," her husband, Robert T. Haines, who has acted as leading man with Viola Allen, Mrs. Fiske and Blanche Bates, will begin a starring tour of his own to-morrow at the Berkeley Lyceum Theatre. play is described as a good old fashio love story, laid in Andalusia. Gertrude Coghlan is a beautiful orphan heiress who has been pestered by penniless and unattractive suitors till she declares that, uniess a husband to her taste be found by the Fiesta of Santiago, she will enter a convent and devote her fortune to the Church. Mr. Haines is a most religious young man by name Don Juan. An exbandit and fortune bunter is also after the heirers and he might have abdueted her if heiress and he might have abducted her if— All the complications end happily and they are promised to be extremely picturesque.

"Siberia," the famous melodrama written by Bartley Campbell for theatregoers of a score of years ago, has been brought up to date by William A. Brady and Joseph R. Grismer and is to be revived at the Academy of Music to-morrow night. Few of his successors have equalled Mr. Campbell as a manufacturer of "thrillers." In the revised "Siberia" the original massacre has been made over into a reproduction of the wholesale killing at Kishineff, and his scene has been made the exciting dramatic incident of the piece.

For the New Year Mr. Conried is to produce at the Irving Place Theatre on Tuescalled "Zum Einsiedler" ("The Hermit Inn"), in which an elderly married couple who are celebrating their silver wedding at the inn get mixed up with a bride and brideinn get mixed up with a bride and bride-groom of tenderer years. This is to be a curtain raiser for Fulda's version of Ed-mond Rostand's poetic comedy "Die Ro-mantischen" ("The Romancers"), in which Harry Walden and Margarethe Russ have the principal parts. On Friday evening Agathe Barescu, the Roumanian actress, will appear in Gullparzer's tragedy "Medea." To-morrow afternoon the children's fairy play "Dornroschen" will have its last performance and to-morrow night will be the last for "Die Sternschuuppe."

The plays already on the boards begin the New Year with great promise. It is the eighth week of Charles Wyndham and Mary Moore at the New Lyceum Theatre. and they are still drawing crowded houses to see them in "Mrs. Gorringe's Necklace." They give an extra matinéa to-morrow.

Next Saturday evening Edward Terry will be seen at the Princess Theatre in his favorite rôle of Dick Phenyl, the graceless harrister, who adores "Sweet Lavender, Mr. Terry's, even more than Mr. Pinero's fame has depended upon this idyllic cornedy of life in the Inner Temple. Mr. Terry has played in the piece nearly 3.000 times, and it is still in demand. Till Saturday he will

The welcome given to Maude Adams at the Empire Theatre on her reappearance in "The Little Minister" has been repeated at every performance in the last week. She will continue in Barrie's play for three weeks longer, and then will appear in a new one, but it is apparent from the de-mand for seats that she could continue with great profit to present "The Little

To-morrow night at the Garrick Annie Russell begins the last week of her successful engagement in "Brother Jacques." She has a delightful part in the comedy and acts it in the way that made her famous

Edma May and "The School Girl" also begin the last week to-morrow at Daly's Theatre. Fo four months this attraction has drawn large audience. Miss May and her associates, Messrs. Grossmith, Blakely and Wright, the three Gaiety Theatre comedians, are leaving hosts of

Ethel Barrymore is still tremendously popular at the Hudson Thenire in "Sunday" and the end of her run there will not be for

"Bates in Toyland," the Hamlin and Mitchell musical extravaganza, which ran for twenty-three weeks at the Majestic Theatre last season, returns here tomorrow for a three weeks' engagement. Several new numbers have been written for "Toyland" by its authors, Glen Mac-Donough and Victor Herbert, among them a comic song for Gaston and Stone, called "Don't Be' a Villain," and "Beatrice Barefacts," sung by Gus Pixley and Mabel Bartices. rison. A few changes have been made in the company. Imacio Martinetti now has the role of Alan, but most of the principals are the same. Victor Herbert will direct the orchestra to-morrow.

Fritzi Scheff is doing well in "Patinitza" at the Broadway. Suppe's tuneful score has provided her with good music to sing, and the rest of the opera's features are the rest of the opera's features are the rest of the opera's features. thoroughly well liked.

This is David Warfield's last week at the

Belasco Theatre. Theatre to make way for Mrs. Leslie Carter in "Adrea," in which she has won tremendous applause in Washington. Mr. Warfield's he takes "The Music Master" to the Bijou own success shows no sign of diminishing after many weeks.

Viola Allen in the picturesque version of "A Winter's Tale" at the Knickerbocker is drawing well. The shepherds' dance in the play is particularly effective.

Mrs. Fiske and her company are playing "Leah Kleschna" to the largest audiences the Manhattan Theatre has held in a long while. Praise of the acting of the whole in a play which affords opportunities for good acting.

May Irwin is to go at the end of this week. She has introduced new songs and new gowns to the Bijou Theatre in "Mrs. Black Is Back," and her closing week is likely to be of the "standing room only" kind. "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch" is

going too at the week end from the Savoy, She is a cheerful old lady whose acquaintuld be made by any who have neglected to meet her. The favorite Christmas show and proba-

bly the favorite of New Year's has been the gorgeous "Humpty Dumpty" at the New Amsterdam." It is especially delightful to children, but is pleasing to any one, whether Large audiences have rewarded Klaw & Erlanger for their reduction of prices at the

New York Theatre, and the rural Western play, "Home Folks," which occupies the play, "Home Folks," which occupies the stage there is generally praised. Its au-thor, C. T. Dazey, wrote "In Old Kentucky" long ago. He expects to find this as populong ago. He ex Fay Templeton and the amusing Pete Dailey are as entertaining as ever in the new musical play "In Newport," at the Lib-erty Theatre. Its act showing the stage of erty Theatre.

the Casino at Newport is a travesty on society entertainments and incidentally presents many of the very funny incidents noticed in the rehearsal of a musical production. In the last act there is another novelty in a football game between two teams of six in the restriction. of girls in the costume of the gridiron. "The Sho-Gun" continues to do well at Wallack's. It goes with a vim and dash which would hardly be expected in the real Corea. In the cest are Trivie Friganza.

real Corea. In the cost are Trivie Friganza. Christie MacDonald May Ten Broeck, William C. Weedon and Thomas Leary "Common Sense Bracket" seems to be just the sort of play that is popular at the Fourteenth Street Theatre. The New England life portrayed by its author, Charles W. Doty, has proved a great draw-

ing card there. Lillian Russell closed the first week of her engagement at the Casino theatre last night with every seat occupied and the prospect of a crowded house for every night of "Lady Texze" during the six weeks it will stay there. The opera is intended to appeal to the better class of theatregoers, and Miss Russell alone is a

"The College Widow," at the Garden Theatre, has not known a poor night's business since its opening last September. It seems to attract all classes of theatre goers equally. _ S At the Herald Square King Owl, Lady

Peacock, Jenny Wren, Miss Parrot and all the other bird stars of "Woodland" have become firmly settled in their new quarters. They entertain in the new comic opera The success of "It Happened in Nordland" has settled that this musical comedy of Victor Herbert and Glen Macdonough

will stay at the Lew Fields theatre till late in the spring. Gertrude Whitty has suc-ceeded May Robson as the Princess Aling and another newcomer, May Vaudain, will join the company to-marrow. James K. Hackett begins his last week in "The Fortunes of the King" at the Lyrio

Theatre to-morrow. He will be followed by Jefferson De Angelis and his company The American Theatre has a highly sur cessful melodrama in "Shadows on the Hearth." It shows life in a New Jersey

village at the end of the civil war. The Proctor theatres begin the new year with an attractive programme in a The vandeville bill at the Twenty-t Street Theatre is headed by the fan Street Theatre is headed by the fan Johi troupe of Japanese jugglers. George C. Beaiface and Bertha Walzinger appear to a musical sketch, "The Woman Who Hesitates Is Won," introducing econ songs in German. Stuart, the male Patti, is another attraction, and among the real are Signer Pavese, the fencing master, Sallie Stember, Emmet Devoy and his company in a farce called "The Saintly Mr. Billings; the Record Sisters singers and discers and

Rooney Sisters, singers and dancers, and many more.

"My Wife's Husbards," another of Edwin Milton Royle's successful comedes, is to be played at the Fifth Avenue this work by the stock company, which they do Fdwin Arden and Isabella Evision. They is a good vandavalle bill us well.

At the 125th Street playbouse "Table Romani," another Marie Corelli design will occupy the stage for the week. soprano. Sunday concerts are given at all the

Della Fox is the star sitraction of Moith's this week. She will sing "A Pietty Girl, a Summer Night," and some of the other songs that have made her famous the other attractions are "T Cauldron," Dolan and Lephan sketch, "Taking Chances;" Rianos" in their comedy, "Iv Ar Westons: Martini and Mazon comical sleight-of-hand. Bucke and Dennsey, Watson and Hill, Gorman and West

The Yorkville has another good bill. Among its attractions for New Year's are Mattie Keene and her company in "Her First Divorce Case," by Eila Wheeler Wil-cox, Powell's Manionettes, George Wilson the Minstrel Man, the Sully Family, Mor-risey and Rich; Polk and Tresk, Marion Carson, the Lutz Brothers and the vita-

Among Tony Pastor's star performers are Sydney Deane and company, presentare Sydney Deane and company, presenting "Christmas on Blackwell's Island'; Nat Leroy and Minnie Woodford, "the conversational comedy two"; Charles B. Lawlog and his daughters in a musical comedy introducing several of Mr. Lawlor's own compositions; Tom Moore, the coon singer: Miss Naomi Ethardo, in a balancing act; Waldorf and Mendez, acrobats; Raymond Findlay and Lottie Burker: the Cravers, Buffalo Bill's lasso experts; Annie Bernstein and the three Keatons.

stein and the three Keatons. at Hammerstein's Victoria Theatre this week. The Three Vassar Girls appear for the last time before they start on a European tour. Jewell's manikins have been reengaged by request. Then there are also W. H. Murphy, Blanche Nichols and her company, Charles F. Scamon, Green and Werner, the De Koe Trio, and Kennedy and Quartelli, and thin is the last week at Hammerstein's of the Horse Show.

At the Circle are B. G. Knowles, the come dian: Howard Thurston, i'lusionist; Mary Norman, the entertainer: Ernest Bogan, the unbleached American; the Casting Dunbars, D'Alma's dogs and monkeys, the village choir, and the vitagraph.

At Hurtig & Seamon's Kathryn Ostermen